

LESSON 8: ACTS 14

JUNE 1, 2016

OVERVIEW

- . Iconium – Acts 13:51-14:5
- . Lystra and Derbe – Acts 14:6-20
- . Return to Antioch in Syria – Acts 14:21-28

ICONIUM – ACTS 13:51-14:5

- . The route from Pisidian to Antioch
 - . Traveled along a Roman road in a high mountain plateau
 - . Wasteland, desert like conditions
 - . Ultimate destination was Lystra, yet decided to turn off main road and go to Iconium
- . Iconium was a beautiful little city set amidst fertile farms and fruit orchards
 - . Were greeted with an outpouring of support
 - . Support came from both the Jewish and gentile communities
 - . After a brief time the unbelieving Jews turned against them
 - . Despite the opposition, they were able to stay in Iconium a long time to encourage new converts
 - . The Holy Spirit enabled them to perform miracles while there – Acts 14:3
 - . Entire city seemed divided in to two camps – those for and those against
 - . The Lord protected them by letting them know when it was time to leave

LYSTRA AND DERBE – ACTS 14:6-20

- . Paul's first meeting with Timothy's family – Acts 16:1-3
 - . Very few Jews living in Lystra, in contrast to Iconium
 - . The pagan population spoke a mountain dialect that Paul and Barnabas didn't understand
 - . A Jewish family took them in and provided shelter and safety
 - . This was Timothy's family
 - . The mother, Eunice, was a Jew who married a Greek
 - . She understood Greek, which aided Paul
 - . Her family had a deep faith, which allowed Timothy to grow up with a solid understanding of the Old Testament – 2 Timothy 1:5

- . Key events while in Lystra – Acts 14:6-20
 - . Healing of the cripple – Acts 14:6-10
 - . Paul heals a well-known cripple from birth
 - . Paul looks directly at him during his talk, declares he has faith and tells him to stand and walk
 - . The cripple stands and is healed
 - . Story very similar to that of Peter's in Acts 3
 - . Many eyewitnesses who come to faith
 - . Attempt to worship the apostles – Acts 14:11-15
 - . After miracle, some started calling Paul, Hermes, and Barnabas, Zeus
 - . Locals believed these gods had returned to them in human form
 - . People poured out of the city to nearby temple of Zeus
 - . The priest along with the people prepare to honor their guests
 - . They decorate oxen with garlands and bring them to the city walls to be sacrificed
 - . At this point Paul and Barnabas rush out and beg the people to stop
 - . They cry out they are not gods, merely people like them
 - . Paul speaks to the people – Acts 14:15-17
 - . Paul appeals to the conscience and reason that God gives every person – Romans 2:12-15
 - . He begins with the foundational basis to all revelation – God is creator of all things
 - . Speaks to God's kindness in His full provision for their needs
 - . He then forcefully explains that he is merely a messenger
 - . His message - turn from worshipping these false idols to an unknown god, and start worshipping the one true living God
 - . Finally, Paul deals with their ignorance
 - . In times past god allowed people to walk by their own ideas
 - . Now the time has come to change
 - . Results of Paul's speech at Lystra – Acts 14:18
 - . Some continued to believe them to be false gods and went forward with their sacrifices
 - . Others listened and came to belief
 - . Others gathered support against them and became united in their desire to silence Paul and Barnabas
 - . Paul is stoned and taken for dead – Acts 14:19
 - . Unbelieving Jews arrive from both Iconium and Antioch
 - . They quickly convince the locals to turn against Paul
 - . They then stone Paul and throw him outside the city walls thinking he is dead
 - . In the evening Barnabas and the new disciples sneak outside the city to bury Paul
 - . As they stand around the body praying, Paul suddenly wakes up, stands up, and with new found energy is ready to head back in to the city

- . Paul's remarkable comeback amazes both believers and unbelievers
- . The next day, Paul and Barnabas leave and begin their journey back home
- . They spend a short time in Derbe where Paul recuperated
 - . Their time in Derbe was peaceful and they were able to convert many believers

RETURN TO ANTIOCH IN SYRIA - ACTS 14:21-28

- . They revisit some of the places they traveled at the beginning of the mission talking to and encouraging the new believers and church elders
 - . Paul's trials and persecution served as encouragement to these believers
 - . Paul's enduring love for them also encouraged and inspired them
 - . Paul encourages them to be prepared for and to endure trials
 - . New local churches needed to be formed in each of these areas
 - . The new converts could not continue to worship in the synagogues
 - . Paul and Barnabas had to appoint local elders
 - . Not knowing if he would ever return, Paul encouraged the church to stay strong and never stop believing
- . After two years away, Paul and Barnabas return to their home church of Antioch
 - . The church assembles for a missionary conference and listen to the journeys of Paul and Barnabas
 - . How exciting it must have been to listen to the stories and try to imagine the new churches spread throughout this foreign land

NEXT LESSON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2016 - ACTS 15:1-35